

Magistrates Authority  
ASSERTED  
In A  
SERMON,

Preached at the *Cathedral* in  
N O R W I C H.

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By JAMES PASTON, M.A. *Rector of*  
*Tinningham in Suffolk.*

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1 Pet. 2. 13.

*Submit yourselves to every Ordinance of man for the Lords sake.*

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L O N D O N,

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To the Right Worshipful

Robert Bendish Esq;

Mayor of the City of

N O R W I C H.

SIR,

**N**othing but your Importunity could have been sufficiently prevalent to make this Discourse appear in publick: for I am so conscious of my own Inabilities, that I should have thought your Candour and Zeal for the good of the Church and Nation had imposed too much upon your Judgment, when you moved me to let you print it; but that all men give so full *Encomiums* of your worth, that I must have no small stock of Infidelity to doubt it. Such as it is, I here humbly present you with, and desire it may have its designed end; that it may promote *Unity* and *Peace*, and perswade men not to put that asunder in Practice, which God hath joyned in Pre-

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cept,

cept, namely *Fear* to *Himself*, and *Honour* to his *Vice-gerents*; into the number of which your Merits have worthily promoted you, and made you *Representative* in that great and noble City, unto him who is *Representative* to the great King of Heaven. And therefore although the World may blame my *Presumption* in this Action, yet it cannot accuse my *Obedience*, since it is to your *Commands*; and especially since those *Commands* descended so low as to become *Requests*, and thereby rendred themselves the more obliging: which since they have given me the boldness to venture these following pages abroad, I beg that of you, which your native *Generosity* will prompt you to vouchsafe, namely your *Patronage* of them, and hereby you will honour

*Your Servant in Christ*

JAMES PASTON.

To





# To the Reader.

READER;

**I** Beg no more at your hands , than common Charity will oblige you to grant , namely to believe me ( who never gave you cause to do otherwise ) in telling you that this following Discourse had not been committed to the Press , but upon the importunity of the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Norwich, and some other Friends , whose Judgment I have cause to esteem above mine own. If you will accuse me for my Concession: ( although unwillingly obtained ) I confess I have only this to plead in my excuse ; that my intentions were honest. I am ready also to concur with any Man , whose opinion it is , that the Subject might have been much better handled , by some more able and judicious Advocate; and for this reason have I been so long struggling ( since I preached it ) against the Arguments used by my Friends, before I would yeild, being very loth to appear in publick so early. Therefore, as I hope you will not doubt of my veracity, so neither will I question your good-nature, till I have just cause ; but will believe you will pardon a fault committed with so much reluctancy. As for the Discourse it self, the Composure of it is too mean for any mans envy , and the design of it too good for any Mans scorn, and therefore I promise my self-security.





## ROM. XIII. V.

*Wherefore ye must needs be subject,  
not only for wrath, but also for Con-  
science sake.*



ORDER is a thing so necessary to the preservation of the Universe, that should this be dissolved, all things would soon relapse, and degenerate into that Chaos out of which the great Creator at first raised them. The Earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and confusion, like a cloud overspread and concealed the greatest glories, till the God of Order divided things from things, and ranked every being into its fitting place; giving to the Sun, Moon and Stars their proper spheres; the Earth that situation from whence it shall never be moved, and setting bars and bounds to the fluctuations of the Sea, and prescribing limits to its boisterous and insulting waves, and then did the *ἡσυχία* speak the Wisdom and Glory of its Maker.

And as the most wise Creator saw this necessary in the greater World, so likewise in the *Microcosm*, Man,

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the Epitome thereof. Ordering therefore a *Superiority* and *Inferiority* between the Soul and the Body; making the one capable of ruling, the other of being ruled; nay, giving to every member its due place and office, and uniting them by that need they have of each others help and support.

And accordingly has Nature taught the most barbarous Nations to order their Bodies Politick; and in the Sacred Writ, we no sooner read of Man, but we read of Dominion and Subjection: nay, the grand Council of Heaven had them in design together: for at the same time that God said, *Let us make Man in our Image, and after our likeness*, he also said, *and let him have Dominion*: and therefore, so soon as that Blessing (Increase and Multiply) began to be effectual, every man was King and Priest in his own Family, and many Families combined into Nations, and were ordered into ranks and degrees.

And this was taught not onely by the Documents of Nature, but also by the God of Nature himself: who when he chose a peculiar People, he instituted a Government of King and Priest, and led them by the hand of *Moses* and *Aaron*. A King to rule, and a Priest whose lips should preserve knowledge: his divine Wisdom knowing that all could not be equal, but that every man must keep that order, and observe that station, wherein Providence has placed him: *Wherefore ye must needs be subject*.

Nor did *Christianity* lay level the goodly Symetry of this glorious Fabrick, or reduce the beauty of Order into the ruinous heap of its pristine Confusion: and therefore the Apostle uses the same kind of Arguing, to perswade us to Subjection and Obedience in the  
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going Chap. v. 4. and so on, telling us, that as we have many members in one Body, and all members have not the same Office; so we being many, are one body in Christ: but yet not equal, but every one members one of another. Having then (said he) gifts differing according to the Grace that is given us, whether Prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of Faith; or Ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or, he that teacheth on teaching: or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it *ἐν ἀπλότητι* with liberality: he that ruleth, with diligence. By these and some other Duties which he presseth in the following verses, he sufficiently intimates that we should endeavour to live peaceably with all men, by keeping every one in his due order; this is the way and means to it. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not onely for wrath but also for Conscience sake.*

Which words of the Apostle are a Conclusion, and inference from what had been premised in the foregoing part of the Chapter; in the beginning whereof he layes down this injunction, *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers*, and he gives a sufficient Reason why Subjection must be yielded to such *For* (saith he) *there is no power but of God*; whether it be that power which Christ has left in his Church, or that of Heathen Emperours under whom ye live; The Powers that be, are ordained of God. The Sin of resisting therefore is not small; *For whosoever resisteth the Power*, though he may deceive himself, and think he only resisteth man, yet his resistance reaches further: *He resisteth the ordinance of God*: this is the nature of the sin, and therefore, *He that doth resist, shall receive to himself Damnation*; this is the punishment. For further,

(as he tells them, *verse 3.*) The end and design of Gods setting Rulers over them, 'is not to terrifie them from good, but from evil; and therefore they ought to be afraid to resist that power, which is given of God for so good an end: which, since it is so good, they must needs *be subject*, not only for *wrath*, not only for fear of the sword which the Magistrate bears, but although he should lay by his sword, though he should suspend his punishment, yet merely *For Conscience sake they must be subject*.

Now this is plaint to common sense, that the Apostle injoyne subjection, not only in civil, but also in spiritual concerns: but in what particulars this Subjection is to be yielded, he hath not declared either here or in any other place. The Church of the Jews was strictly limited and prescribed in many particular circumstances, and whosoever should dare to transgress these, or make any alteration in these punctilio's, was sure to run inevitably upon a Curse. But Christ has given us an enlargement, and has granted liberty to the Christian Church, to institute and appoint what indifferent Ceremonies should be used: and therefore we finde onely general Rules laid down, as 1. Cor. 16. 16. the Apostle speaking concerning *Timotheus* and *Apollos*, fellow-workers together with him in the Lord; *I beseech you brethren* (saith he) *submit your selves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.* And so again, *Hebr. 13. 17.* *Obey those that have the rule over you, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account:* and the Apostle St. Peter, 1. Pet. 2. 13. *Submit your selves to every ordinance of man for the Lords sake, whether it be to the King as supream, or unto Governours that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers,*

doers, and the praise of them that do well. And the Apostle St Paul, writing to Titus Bishop of Crete, tells him, Tit. 1. 5. that *For this cause he left him there*, that he might *set things in order that were wanting*: so that to make our Christian freedom, a ground of Disobedience, is to use our liberty *ὡς ἑκάλυμμα τῆς κακίας* as a cover or cloke for our maliciousness. For obedience to Governours both Civil and Ecclesiastical, is as plainly commanded in the writings of the New Testament, as love to God and our Neighbour: and disobedience is so evidently forbidden, that unless we be blinded either with Pride or Ignorance, we may as easily discern the prohibition, as *Thou shalt not kill*, and *Thou shalt not steal*.

Nay, not onely the Gospel, but Nature it self has writ it in such Characters, and so universally legible, that all Nations have read and obeyed it: and no people though never so barbarous, were scarce ever yet found, that had not a Government in Spiritual and Civil concerns. So that Subjection and Government have been *semper & ubique*, at all times and in all places. So that he that disputes against Authority, at the same time argues against the Sacred Scripture, and Reason, and the practice of all Ages and Nations. For Subjection, we see, is commanded to be yielded to Superiours, whether in Church or State, to Ecclesiastical or Civil Power, or if it be both united in one, but in what particulars is not here specified; therefore observing the method of the Text, we will enquire,

I. In what things we must be subject.

II. Wherein lies the necessity of such Subjection.

III. The Reasons laid down by the Apostle.

1. For *Wrath*.

2. For *Conscience sake*.

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1. In

I. In what things we must be subject to the higher Powers : and that is, First, In all things God has commanded. Secondly, In all things which he has not plainly and evidently forbidden : and that not only in Civil, but also in Spiritual matters : and for proof of this last, I chiefly design my following Discourse.

I. In all things God has commanded, we must be subject to our Superiours : and to use Arguments to prove this, would be needless and superfluous : for I suppose if our Superiours commanded Love, and Peace and Unity, we ought to obey, because God and Nature have commanded the same things ; but in regard that every thing is not set down, nor every particular circumstance specified which may serve in order to the preservation of them, Therefore,

II. If our Superiours prescribe this or that way for the attaining to, and preservation of them ; if this or that way be not forbidden by God, we must in this also be subject. For although it be true that Christ has made us free, yet nevertheless St. Peter exhorts us, 1 Pet. 2. 13. even for *His sake, to submit to every ordinance of man* : and not to *use this liberty as a cloke of maliciousness*, as a pretence for Rebellion and Disobedience ; for that freedom which Christ purchased for us, is, Freedom from sin, Freedom from the curse of the Law, Freedom from the Ceremonial Law, from Circumcision and Sacrifices : and it is certain, that when Christ abrogated those Circumstances which belonged to the *Jewish*, he did not institute others as appendages to the *Christian Worship* : but yet he gave power to those whom he left in his stead to do it. If he had instituted any himself, they had been indispensably necessary whether our Superiours had commanded them

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or not : But now they are not so *indispensably* necessary, till such time, and no longer than the Commands of our lawful Superiours make them so.

For not the least drop of *Christ's* blood was so vainly spent as to purchase freedom for us in things absolutely indifferent, that is, in such things as were in their own nature indifferent, concerning which there was no command : For these were free before ; and therefore free to be performed before and after they are commanded, and the Command is necessarily to be obeyed.

It is true, if the Supreme King of Heaven *evidently* forbids what his *Substitutes* upon Earth *injoyn* ; we know which to obey, *God* rather than *Man*. But if it be not *evidently* forbidden, nay if it be *doubtful*, whether God has forbidden or not, we are bound to obey, at least till we see some *manifest* and very *plausible* ground for our hesitation. For herein we carry along with us the virtue of obedience, and God's Precept by his Apostle ( *Submit your selves* ) will be our plea ; whereas if we err the other way, there is scarce any thing will render our delinquency excusable.

And therefore if we examine the sufferings of Saints and Martyrs, we shall scarce find that any ( who were truly called so ) ever suffered for disobedience in things *indifferent* ; and made necessary by lawful Authority. *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, Dan. 3. were thrown into the fiery furnace, rather than they would obey the Kings command : But the Command was not in a thing *indifferent*, but quite contrary to the Command of God, namely to worship an Image, *Daniel*, Ch. 6. was thrown into the Lions Den, not because of standing or kneeling in his Devotions, but meerly because  
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he prayed unto God. And the Woman and her seven sons, 2 *Macc.* 7. embraced Death rather than they would eat Swines flesh : But this God had *expressly forbidden*, and had not left it *indifferent*. Saint *John Baptist* was beheaded for reproving *Herods* incest, *St. Stephen* for reproving the Jews infidelity. And the Apostles underwent Bonds, and Imprisonments, and Death, rather than they would forbear preaching Christ to the unbelieving Jews and Heathens; for he had immediately commanded them so to do. And that *Theban Legion* under *Mauritius*, consisting of 6666 *Christians*, suffered death in the days of *Dioctlesian*; not for disobedience in an *indifferent thing*, but for refusing to offer *Sacrifice to the Heathen Gods* : None of these suffered for disobedience in *things indifferent*. Nor do we read of any that refused obedience to those indifferent things which the Apostles enjoined; as to abstain from things strangled, and from blood, which after Christ abolished the Ceremonial Law became absolutely of an indifferent nature; but did any cry out of intrenchment of their Christian Liberty for this ?

We have therefore neither Precept nor Example for disobedience in such things. The Scripture in general commands *obedience to God and Man*, and he has exprest greater displeasure to those who have disobeyed his *Substitutes*, than to those who have more immediately rebelled against *himself* : And therefore we never read that the Earth opened her mouth and swallowed up any, but such as would *not be subject to Earthly Superiors*. A cup of cold water given to Christ's Disciples, he takes as given to himself, and the reward shall be accordingly; and so disobedience

ence to his *Substitutes*, he takes as to himself. For, *He that despiseth you, despiseth me*: Luke 10. 10. and he that *Διὰ τὸ ὑμῶν* obeyeth his Superiors, at the same time pays his homage to Christ, and this is the Sphere of their Dominion, and our Obedience, namely things *indifferent*.

Luke  
10. 6.

And this is no new thing; for notwithstanding the Church of the Jews had the peculiar Circumstances of God's worship so precisely appointed them; yet we find that their Governours did introduce some things of an indifferent nature; and therefore we read, 1 *Chron.* 25. 1. that *David* and the Captains of the Host separated to the service of the sons of *Asaph*, and the rest, who should Prophesie with Harps, and with Psalteries, and Cymbals, which things were never appointed in the Law. They also instituted Feasts and Fasts, as the Feast of *Dedication*, and the Feast of *Purim*, which were so far from being blamed by our Saviour, that he graced the first of them with his presence, as we read *Job.* 10. 22. And the *third*, and *sixth*, and *ninth* hours of Prayer had no *Injunction* to inforce them but Custom, or at most a Law of the Jews own making; and yet were observed by the Apostles themselves, as we may read in these several places of the *Acts* ch. 2. 15. -- 3. 1. -- 10. 9. nor were any of the *Customs* of the Jews reprehended by our Saviour, but such as were contrary to the Law of God delivered in his Word, or by the *Dictates of Nature*.

Nor will it at all excuse our disobedience, if we plead that we see no reason why such and such things should be enjoined: For as the virtues of *Humility*, *Charity*, and *Meekness* are exprest in our obedience to such things; so much *Pride* and *Uncharitableness* is betray'd by our disobedience; for the humble man will consider,

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that although he *himself* sees no necessity, why such things should be commanded; yet that his *Superiours* may, to whom God and Nature has made him a *Subject*, and therefore he submits. But the proud and self-conceited person scorns to be imposed upon, thinks himself at least as wise, if not wiser than his Teachers, and is ready to cry out with *Corah* to the *Rulers* of the people, *Ye take too much upon you*: Whereas if we see no *absolute necessity* of our disobedience, we must needs be *subject*.

And if obedience is to be yielded to no injunction but such as we can see a reason for, *God himself* would have been *disobeyed* upon this score, for he himself has commanded such things as no *natural necessity* appears to be the Parent: For what piece of excellency, or what *natural necessity* was there for *Abraham's* slaying his innocent son, who was Heir of the Promise? yet this God commanded, and this he would have done, had not a counter-command stayed his Sacrificing-knife: And so what *natural intrinsic necessity* was there of the cutting off a Child's fore-skin, or of washing the hands and garments in order to purification from sin? yet these things God commanded; and although there appeared no manifest necessity of the Command, yet so necessary was obedience, that it was performed to them; and as God, so likewise his servants, even under the Gospel have laid upon Men Commands of this nature, as the Apostles enjoined abstinence from *things strangled, and from blood*. Such Commands as these have been given by the Supream King of Heaven, and by those whom he has appointed Rulers upon Earth, and were obeyed, and the obedience was crowned with rewards, and the disobedience punished with revenge.

*Subjection*

*Subjection* therefore may be *necessary*, when for ought we know the *Command is not*, and the obedience virtuous and acceptable.

And where has the great God of Heaven and Earth forbidden the *Dij minorum gentium*? where has he prohibited those of whom he said, *they are Gods*, to institute such Ceremonies, and appoint such Orders as they shall think are decent? or where has he commanded, saying, *Obey not those that Rule over you*? or, *Submit not to such Ordinances of Man*? Let them who call for Scripture to attest every Ceremony, shew where God has therein *forbidden Superiours to command*, or *us to obey* such things? and then there may be some tinkling of reason, among the the huge *Vox & præterea nihil*, the mighty noise, which only serves to amaze the ignorant, and to drown the whispers of *Seditious Intimations*, and to deter well-meaning souls from that *subjection*, which Scripture, Reason, and Experience teaches to be due to *Superiours*.

We our selves of our own accord do many things for which God hath given us no particular Command: Is it *unlawful* in it self for a Man to stand or kneel at his Prayers? certainly no: for if it be, it is because it is against some Law of Nature, or against some Precept in Gods Word: But it is against none of these; and therefore it is not unlawful in it self to do them. If therefore it be lawful to do them before they are commanded, certainly it is lawful after; for since God has made it our duties to obey the Commands of our Superiours, their Commands cannot make that unlawful, which was lawful before: but if nothing is to be done, but what is commanded in Scripture, expressly in every particular circumstance, we shall

never finde the *true Worship of God*, either in *Geneva* or *Scotland* or *Amsterdam* it self.

Therefore the sum is this, the *Saints* and *Martyrs* of old never suffered for disobedience in *things indifferent*.

God has no where prohibited our obedience in such things, though we see no reason why they should be commanded : for himself has been pleased to appoint such things as do not appear to be naturally necessary, and likewise his servants, even under the Gospel, and he has rewarded such obedience. He has also commanded obedience to every ordinance of man. Those things before they were ordinances, were in themselves lawful, and therefore are so after, because the Command cannot make them otherwise : for he that commands them is appointed by God to this very end, that he might command, therefore it plainly appears that there is a *necessity of Subjection in things indifferent*. *We must needs be subject*. But wherein lies the necessity ? this is the

*Second thing* which I come now to treat of, how it is necessary that we be subject in *things indifferent*. And before we weigh those Arguments that prove this, we must consider that it is *impossible* to perform the worship of God without such things as (before they are commanded) are indifferent.

The whole World, both Christians, Jews, and Heathens agree upon this, that *God is to be worshipped* ; but at what time, in what place, with what circumstances is not generally agreed upon. Whether on the last, or first day of the week, whether in a private house, or in a publick place set apart for that purpose ; whether sitting, or standing, or kneeling, is indifferent

different, till the Law of God or man has determined. But at some of these times, in some of these places, with some of these Ceremonies, the Worship of God must be performed; and there is no man that exclaims against a Ceremony, but is his own accuser, if he ever sayes his Prayers: for he must either use the Ceremony of standing, or sitting, or (if he can stoop so low) *Like* of kneeling, or lying prostrate; and one of these is as *18. 11.* much a Ceremony as another: he that stands as stiff as *Mat 9.* the Pharisee, is as ceremonious, as he that kneels with *40.* the Apostle, lies prostrate like our Saviour: and in *20. 36.* some of these Ceremonies the Worship of God must be *21. 5.* performed: And since any of them is as lawful as the *Mark* other, the Superiour may appoint which he in Reason and Conscience thinks fitting; and in so doing he commands nothing *unlawful*: and therefore we must be subject to either, which he shall appoint; and that

First, because *God hath so commanded*, which questionless were of it self a sufficient obligation, though alone. And he that will deny that God hath so commanded, must first erase many places of Scripture. For God has as plainly therein commanded honour *your Father and Mother*, and *obey those that have the rule over you*, as he hath said, *Thou shalt have none other Gods before me*. Therein also is recorded that as dreadful vengeance has been inflicted, upon the disobedient to earthly Governours, as upon the rebellious to the King of Heaven. Therein also he has plainly told us, *Mal. 2. 7.* that *The Priests lips should preserve knowledge*, and that the people *should seek the Law at his mouth*: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts: and were not men plainly obstinate, as well as prejudiced, they could not but be convinced that the Gospel gives no liberty, nor



makes so wide a gap for licentiousness, as to give them power to do what they list, either in matters of spiritual or civil concern: but manifestly injoynes us to  
*Mat. 12.* 17. give *Cæsar* his due, and not only to *Fear God*, but also  
*1 Pet. 2.* to *Honour the King*. And questionless Christ gave not  
 17. that great power to his Church, but with an intent they should be obeyed: when he said that *whatsoever*  
*Mat. 18.* they *should bind on earth should be bound in Heaven: and*  
 18. *whatsoever they should loose on earth should be loosed in*  
*Matth.* *Heaven*. Nay though *Scribes and Pharisees* which are  
 23. *Hypocrites*, sit in *Moses his Chair*, though their lives were  
*Luke* not fit for imitation; yet he tells his disciples their  
*10. 16.* Precepts must be obeyed; and *whatsoever they say unto them they must doe*. And if this be the Word of God:  
*Rom. 13* *He that despiseth you despiseth me. Let every Soul be*  
 1. *subject to the higher power. Submit your selves to every*  
*1 Pet. 2.* *Ordinance of man*: and the like. I say, if this be the  
 13. Word of God, and this Word of God has any power over us, *We must be subject*.

Secondly, God has not onely injoynd this in his written Word, but also in those Precepts of Reason which he has imprinted by the hand of Nature. For Unity in the external Worship of him who is one God, is necessary for the well-being of the Church. For commonly, Unity and Peace, like *Hippocrates* his Twins, are born and dye together: for we know there are no greater Hatred and Animosities in the World, than what have risen from *Difference in Religion*. And as the holy Psalmist, and Reason will inform us, that it is  
*Pf. 113.* 1. a *Pleasant thing for Brethren to dwell together in Unity*: so sad experience will tell us, that Division tends to the dissolution of Concord: and carries men into war and bloodshed, cruelty and oppression, and no combustions



sions have been more furious and dreadful, than those that have been kindled from Altar set up against Altar: for what will not men doe, for that Religion that they think is true? and for that Cause which they think is Gods? and such an Opinion has every man of his own particular cause, and therefore will he hazard Life and Estate for promoting it; and all that are not of his way, are as zealous in procuring advantages for theirs. What better expedient therefore can there be to surcease these differences among the Subjects of the *Prince of Peace*, and to unite them in *Christian Love and Charity*, than to prescribe one mode of Worship for all to embrace, which is not contrary to the Will of that one God whom we all worship? that since there is *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptisme*, we who profess this one Lord, one Faith, one Baptisme, should be also of one mind: should be perfectly joyned together according to the Apostles injunction, *in the same minde, and in the same judgment.*

Eph. 4.

5.

2 Cor.

13. 11.

1 Cor. 1.

10.

And the grand necessity of this will further appear, if we consider how often the Apostle inculcates this very thing: it is this he begins with, *1 Cor. 1. 10.* which he presses with Intreaty, and conjures them by that blessed Name to which all should bow and yield. Now, *I beseech you brethren by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye speak the same thing: and that there be no Divisions among you.* And it is this he ends with *2 Cor. 13. 1.* and endears the Command with the Promise of a Blessing, which will sufficiently crown our Obedience, *Be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you:* and wherefore is this Exhortation so frequently repeated? but to shew how highly necessary Unity is, since without it, there will be little  
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of that Peace and Charity which should be among Christians, which makes Kingdoms and Societies happy.

Therefore since Unity is the Bond of Peace: Since, unless some particular way be prescribed, Men will have several Modes of Religious worship, since Governors prescribe this or that way, for all to embrace, to the end differences and mischief might be prevented, *We must needs be subject.*

*Thirdly,* Without *subjection* there can be no order, but a strange confusion. If there be no obedience from the Child to the Parent: If there be no subjection from the Servant to the Master: No submission from the Subject to the Ruler, it would be safer living among the Beasts of the Wilderness, than among men. We are not all born Parents, or Masters, or Governours; and questionless we ought not to usurp these places. For God has commanded Children to obey their Parents, Servants their Masters, and also Subjects their Governours. And if a Parent, or Master should command his Child, or Servant, in the publick duties of his Family, to use this or that Prayer with him, at this or that time, in this or that place, in this or that posture: What place of Scripture, or what Precept of nature forbids their obedience, so it be not contrary to the Word of God? and if a Parent, or Master has this power over a Child, or Servant, why may not our Superiours appoint the like things to those whom God had committed to their charge, for whom they must give an account? why may they not provide that all things be done in *decency* and in *order*? since, if there be any undecencies, any disorders, they must be as liable to punishment at the great day as any

Heb. 13.

17.

1 Cor.

14. 40.

any Parent, or Master, for the disorders, and undependencies of his Child or Servant. And that Man that disobeyes his Superiours, at the same time teaches, and pleads that his Child or Servant may refuse obedience to himself. For he has no other Charter for his liberty. And there is no more ground for the levelling of Kingdoms, than for making all equal in Families: And God hath given us no warrant for either, for he is the *God of Order, not the Author of Confusion*. If therefore we break from those stations which his most wise Providence has set us, if with the Complices of *Corah* we take too much upon us, though with *Azzah* to support that Ark, which *Faction* and *Prophaneness* has put into a tottering condition, we provoke the God of Order, and have cause to fear his vengeance. *Wherefore we must needs be subject.*

1 Cor. 14  
33.

*Fourthly*, We must needs be subject, because our *Superiours must needs command*. Men commonly are apt to run into error; and the pride or ignorance of some Men, makes them as apt to deceive, and to be deceived: To mislead, and to be misled into *Factions* and *Divisions*, and those *Divisions* breed a dislike between this or that party; and that dislike produces uncharitableness; and this uncharitableness proceeds to hatred, and this hatred brings forth cruelty, blood, and ruine, to the scandal and undoing of Religion, and Justice. Now those whom God sets over a Nation, are bound in Conscience to prevent these miseries; and to institute some ways to reduce Men to that Unity, Love, and Charity, which should be among Christians. If therefore they be bound in Conscience to command, we no less to obey: For without our Obedience, their Commands can be no Remedy. If the Governours of a Church or

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Nation,

Nation, do not endeavour to prevent by some injunctions, those miseries which fall upon a people, for whose Souls they watch, they questionless must give an account at the great Audit. And so likewise they who are the people of such a Church or Nation, if they obey not those that rule over them, in those Injunctions which for so good an end are laid upon them, they will find a dreadful doom at the last day, when they shall appear before his Tribunal, who is the God of Love and Unity. Wherefore *we must needs be subject.*

And thus we see in what things we must be subject.

And also wherein lies the necessity.

And I presume this necessity is not taken away, by the suspension of the penal Laws. And my presumption is so far from being groundless, that it is founded upon the words of the Apostle, in that part of my Text which I am now going to treat of. Which tells us; *we must be subject not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake*; not only for fear of the Punishment, but also for the love of the Duty.

First, For *Wrath*; *to avoid this we must be subject*: For self-preservation is a duty which cannot be dispensed with; and therefore that Man that shall suffer, rather than perform this or that thing which is indifferent, his blood is upon his own head. He that will sacrifice his Life, or Health, or Estate, to an obstinate groundless humour, although he scruples a Ceremony, is so far Superstitious, that he is a great Idolater, for he offers up all to his own vain imagination. For what should make kneeling at our Prayers less lawful than standing? or a form of Prayer, than a *Directory*? since no  
Scripture

Scripture commands the latter, rather than the former. One is commanded at least by those whom God hath set over us: The other neither by God or Man. And what can better merit the name of *Will-Worship*, than that which is set up by every particular Man's will?

But here is the Grand inducement to disobedience in such things. Men call that *persecution*, which is but being *buffeted for their faults*; and glory in suffering for the Cause of God, when alas there is no such thing. For God never required this at their hands: Therefore when we exclude our selves from the privilege of the Church or Nation wherein we live, rather than obey in such things as are no where proved to be unlawful. When Men have suffered their bodies to be imprisoned, their Estates to be wasted, and by this means their Families to be unprovided for, to suffer Hunger, and Thirst, and all other kind of Wants: Who has exacted such severe things from them? that they should endure these just effects of the *Superiours wrath, rather than be subject*? Has God? if he has, let us know where; Is it not rather the secret whisper of fancy? or the Itch of vain-glory, to be counted sufferers for the sake of Christ? Or, do we pretend it is the Spirit of God within us, that stirs us up to this disobedience, and makes us undergo such hardships? If we do, it is but merely a pretence: For the Spirit of God never contradicts it self. And the Apostle St. *Paul*, and other holy Men, spake as they were moved by the same Holy Ghost, that these Men pretend to be led by; and they never told us that we should refuse subjection to such Commands, to bring wrath upon our selves: But contrariwise the Apostle tells us, that for this reason

*we must be subject, that we might avoid the wrath.* But this is removed, at least the effects of it, till the great King of Heaven shall *render vengeance to all the Children of disobedience.* But yet there remains a

Second Reason of our subjection to Earthly Governours, which shall never be removed, till the Earth shall be dissolved, and the Heavens themselves shall pass away. And this also is set down in my Text, and that is for Conscience sake; *out of Conscience we must be subject.*

And that this may appear, we must again review those Arguments which prove obedience necessary. For if God has commanded subjection; if Reason tells us that without it there cannot be Unity, and those blessed effects of it, to which we are so frequently exhorted: That without Subjection there will be no Order, but Confusion; that Men are apt to run into Errors: And that our Superiours must needs restrain these inclinations. If things be thus, and thus, as by the premised Reasons has been proved; then questionless, *we are bound in Conscience to be subject.* Nay, if not only the Penalties were suspended, but even the Commands themselves were so relaxed, that every Man might worship God as he pleased; nay, might choose whether he would worship him or no: Yet Justice obliges him to worship him, & Reason requires that this Worship be performed in Unity. And it cannot but appear evident to any that have not wholly disclaimed Reason, that should there be such a liberty granted, that every Man might worship God as he pleased, Men would see such monstrous issues from thence, or divisions and distractions, such a confusion and disorder

der, and from thence such debate, and envy, and hatred, that all *sober good men of what persuasion soever*, would desire to have *some bounds prescrib'd them*, to keep the *Christian World* in peace, and to limit the *extravagancies* of Men. So plainly would they see that *We must needs be subject, even for Conscience-sake*. But the God of Peace and Unity, grant us Wisdom at a cheaper rate, and that we may never learn it again by so sad experience.

And if we would see what manner of posture things would be in, if there were no Order appointed in the Worship of God, we need not travel far for information: we may read enough of it in the sad acts of our late Tragical times, to cause Horrour and Consternation in the minds all good Men. Something may be seen in the ruines of the Houses of God in the Land, whose rubbish are sad Monuments of unbridled Zeal. Sacrilege, and Cruelty, and Rapine may be glutt'd, if they look back into those days, when there was no King, or at least no King obeyed in our *Israel*, and every man did that which right in his own Eyes. When there were almost as many Modes of Religion as Men, and these as variable as the Moon; nay, as the inconstant hours of *Autumn*. Yet every one at all times pretending to be in the right, and all the rest in the wrong. So that no Man knew who to trust to, or what to hold to. That all this tended to the destruction of Peace, to the ruine of Humane Society, and to the unsettling of all things. He that was of one Religion to day, to morrow would be of another, and the next of a third, and at last of none at all. As we have seen some, who have forsaken the Center, and got into the Round; and turned from *Presbytery*,



to *Independency*, from this to *Anabaptism*, from this to *Brownism*, and from this to *Quakerism*, and so tost about with every wind of Doctrine, till at last, by the just Judgment of God, they have been thrown quite besides all *Religion to God* or *Honesty to man*; one day denying the dues of the Church, the next all other whatsoever: for they who at first denied the Revenues of the Ministry, at last proceeded to Opinions, that all things should be common; and sometimes even to the very practice of Levelling; teaching that onely the *Righteous should inherit* the Earth, and all other to be rooted out from the land of the living: and themselves (though parties chiefly concern'd) were Judges and Executioners in the case. But I desire that no other use might be made of these sad Memoires, than to move us to pity, and to pray for those that have been guilty of the sins of Disobedience and Schism, that they may repent of them, and we may discover what Desolation these Sins have wrought in the Earth; that seeing what mischiefs and fatal miseries have proceeded thence, we may be convinced that we are bound in *Conscience to be subject*, to prevent such ruine, as we may otherwise bring upon our selves and others.

And thus we see in what things we *must be subject*. In those things which God has commanded; and in those things which he has not forbidden: for we have neither precept nor example to the contrary. No place in the whole Scripture forbids us to obey our Governours, neither did ever any of the Martyrs suffer for disobedience in such things.

Secondly, we have also seen the *Necessity* of our Obedience in such things. 1. Because God has so commanded. 2. Because Reason also requires it: because  
peace



peace is necessary, and this cannot be had without Unity: nor will there be Unity without Obedience to those that appoint us the wayes we should observe. 3. Because without it there will be no order. 4. Because there is a necessity that the Superiour must command.

Thirdly, We have also seen the Apostles reasons why we must be subject. 1. For wrath; rather submit in such things as God hath not forbidden than incurr the punishment. 2. Though no punishment be threatned for Disobedience, yet, even for Conscience sake we ought to be subject, rather than bring such miseries upon our selves and others, as are the sad consequence of Disobedience.

But to conclude all; The Providence of the Almighty has plac'd us, where there is nothing commanded us contrary to his Will: there is not a Circumstance in our Worship, not an expression in our LITURGY that God has any where *forbidden*: and therefore questionless we ought to be subject, for God has commanded us so to be: and if his Word had been silent herein, yet Nature, and the practice of all Nations has spoken loud enough in the Case: because *No Worship can be without some Ceremonies; No Peace, Order or Decency, without Unity in those Ceremonies.*

Therefore, although it has pleased our Superiours to suspend the Punishment due to Disobedience, yet the taking away the Penalty, takes away neither the *Justice* nor *convenience* of the *Command*, nor the necessity of our Obedience to it, if we think we must be subject *for Conscience sake.*

If, therefore, we have any regard to the express Commands of God's Vicegerent, who still injoyes Obedi-

Obedience, though not upon any penalty ; if we have any respect to the Will of God himself, who has commanded us also for Conscience sake to submit, if we have any love to Order , to Unity, and Peace, *we must needs be subject* : if we would not have the most pure Church in the World rent in pieces, if we would not have that Religion destroyed, which so strictly enjoynes *Obedience to God*, Justice, and Love, and Charity to *Man*, *we must be subject*.

There is one thing (though not the onely thing) which has given occasion to some undiscerning or uncharitable persons to *refuse Subjection* : and that is the wicked lives of some , who pretend to belong to our Church : But let us endeavour to have our *Conversations* as unblamable as her *Constitutions* , that the malice of the Adversary may yet have less cause to object , and the unwary may not have this for an Argument, *Your lives are bad, therefore your Religion is naught*. And let such as make this an occasion of their Separation, be entreated to consider, That they ought not to persecute that Religion with *Schism*, which others have smitten with *profaneness* : for the Religion may be good, though the Professors of it be bad : and that Christs Religion was never the worse, because one of his Apostles had a Devil.

And let us be entreated by the words of Saint Paul, *Phil. 2. 1, 2. If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of Love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, to fulfill the joy of all, good men, that we be like minded, having the same love bring of one accord and of one mind*. And that we may be so, the same Apostle gives a very fit expedient, and intreats us to use it, *Rom. 16. 17. Now I be-*

*beseech you brethren, mark those that cause division, and offences, contrary to the doctrine you have received, and avoid them : not out of curiosity frequenting the Assemblies of those that divide from us ; lest God punish our Curiosity, by giving us up to be ensnared by their Errors.*

And let us submit to the supream King of Heaven , and to the great Bishop of our Souls, and to the Powers upon Earth for his sake : that at the last day, when he shall summon us all to appear before his dreadful Tribunal, we may be received, where we shall enjoy eternal *Peace and Unity, and Uniformity*, together with Angels, and Saints, who have obeyed him in this, and all other his Commands, and have been *subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.* To which blessed Society, may he in his good time conduct us, who is the God of peace, to whom, together with the Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is most due, all Praise, Honour, and Adoration, hence forth and for evermore. *Amen.*

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